

### **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record fail to teach and/or suggest a support device that has a slot in the lower edge thereof for disposition on the edge of a steel cathode plate and a hole on the upper edge a hole is located for insertion of an electronic cathode identifier. None of the prior art of record show such a structure. Even if a support is found that has a slot on the lower edge and a hole in the upper edge, such support would need to have the capability of the slot on the lower edge being able to seal with the edge of the cathode plate in order to meet the instant claim, since it is well founded in the electrowinning art that such cathode edge must be sealed in order to allow easy removal of the deposited metal from the electrowinning process. Since the instant claims says that the support device is designed to be mounted on the edges of the steel cathode, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the support device must be designed to seal such edge. Further such support device and sealing slot even if found in the prior art would not be enough motivation to use such device as the support device materials must be such that they can handle a corrosive environment such as that of an electrowinning process. Therefore, the instant claim as presented is novel, even though the use of RFID devices for obtaining information and such devices are known, being mounted to apparatus in a corrosive environment is not.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

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accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bruce F. Bell whose telephone number is 571-272-1296. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 6:30 AM - 3:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on 571 272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

BFB  
October 23, 2009

/Bruce F. Bell/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1795